

MAKING MERRY

A beautifully decorated table is essential for a successful party, no matter what the celebration. We asked some of SA's top creatives to give us tips for gorgeous table settings



By Word of Mouth's table decor tips:

- A fabric runner adds instant colour and is ideal if you have a beautiful table that you don't want to cover up completely. Another plus is that it needs very little fabric.
- If you don't have beads, you can fill the hanging glass baubles with sweets, tissue paper or even coloured tinsel.
- On the server we used a metal tree to which we attached more flower-filled jars and bottles with coloured ribbon. As an alternative you could do the same with a spray-painted tree branch. Just make sure it's securely anchored in a container so it doesn't topple over.
- For a similar centrepiece, use boxy white trays and place a piece of mirror cut to size on each. Then top with jars of flowers.



GARDEN PARTY

For By Word of Mouth's creative team, Clive Johnson, Enrika Brianskyte-Sher and Chelsea Warren-Stone (pictured), summer gardens provided all the inspiration they needed for this fun, festive table. "Tangerine and pastels are very hot right now," says Clive, "so we wanted to bring them into our scheme. A striped runner was the answer, and it works well with any kind of table." Glass under plates, clear and pale pink glassware, generous white napkins and a colourful striped ribbon keep the place settings light and fresh. The pretty centrepiece was put together easily by simply popping a couple of garden flowers in a selection of Consol jars and bottles and arranging them on stands topped with mirror. "To add height without blocking the view across the table, we hung glass baubles filled with coloured beads from a network of gut attached to the downlights. They look as though they're floating in mid-air." ▷

Chairs from First Impressions. **Runner**, glass **under plates**, **glassware**, mirrored **stands** and **metal tree** all from By Word of Mouth Hiring. **Flowers** from By Word of Mouth. **Jars** and **bottles** from Consol Glass.

STEAL THIS STYLE

- ▶ Small African tree, R380, TinTown.
- ▼ Juka champagne tub, R1 500, @home.



◀ Pink glass hanging lantern, R139, @home.

FABRIC, FROM TOP: Fergus Stripe Canvas, R340,86/m, and Candy Stripe Canvas, R340,86/m, both The Silk and Cotton Company.

SOURCES

@home home.co.za By Word of Mouth 011 553 7600 or bywordofmouth.co.za Consol Glass 011 603 2080 or consol.co.za First Impressions firstimpressions.co.za The Silk and Cotton Company silkco.co.za TinTown tintown.co.za



TEXT MARY JANE HARRIS PHOTOGRAPHS CHRISTOPH HOFFMANN



Janette's table decor tips:

- To fill up table arrangements, mix fake greenery with genuine foliage. The real stuff makes the fake look authentic.
- If you're using fruit like lemons and apples in a centrepiece, first insert a wooden skewer into them and then place in the arrangement.
- Look at what you have in a new way. For instance, this candleholder was used to display artichokes as well as candles.
- You don't need expensive crockery. My green plates bought some years ago from Mr Price Home look perfect in the mix.



NATURAL SPLENDOUR

"I love coloured glass and combining different colours in a table setting," says Janette Smit (pictured), owner of homeware and gifting store Spaza Gabor in Kyalami, Jo'burg. "I chose blues and greens as they look glamorous but create a cool effect which is ideal on a hot summer's evening."

A shady tree outside the Smits' kitchen provided the perfect setting and a useful branch from which to hang glass lanterns. To create the rustic, organic look she's known for, Janette selected wooden ornaments and fresh fruit and vegetables such as lemons, artichokes, brinjals and butternuts which her good friend, well-known restaurateur and stylist Errol Gobey (pictured) of Bellgables Country Restaurant, turned into opulent arrangements. "The wooden ornaments can be used for any occasion and just by using different fresh produce you can change the look. And don't skimp on candles. Use as many candleholders as you can comfortably fit on the table." ▸

Dining table by Benton Furniture. Green and blue glassware, linen napkins, green ceramic vases and candleholders all from Spaza Gabor.

STEAL THIS STYLE



► Turquoise planter, R310, Santos.

► Wooden container, R138, Santos.

► Rattan place mats, R180 each, La Grange Interiors.



► Food dome, R570, NetDÉcor.

◀ Glasses, R50 for four glasses in different colours, In Good Company.

SOURCES Bellgables Country Restaurant 082 551 8855 Benton Furniture 082 412 6211
In Good Company ingoodcompany.co.za La Grange Interiors lagrangeinteriors.co.za
Mr Price Home mrpricehome.com NetDÉcor netdecor.co.za Santos 011 880 8259 Spaza Gabor 082 457 5252



FOREST FRESH

Using fresh vegetables, spices and raw wood as table decor, Marina Gruttner (pictured), founding partner of Green Catering & Events, takes us from the forest to the table – and back to our roots with the forest foraging theme she created with her colleague, decor stylist Gerhard de Villiers (pictured). “Foraging is synonymous with simplicity and unpretentiousness, so I opted for raw turnips, fennel bulbs, *waterblommetjies* floating in glass bowls and a pestle and mortar filled to the brim with red and black peppercorns. It’s all inspired by trends such as sustainability, growing our own vegetables, good, honest food and absolute freshness. I lifted the vegetables’ purple hues with berry-coloured candles, and added splashes of silver and crystal for a festive ambience. Textures carry the theme through, from the stone pestle and mortar to the handmade felt napkin rings. The shape of the dinnerware reflects the eco-feel, directing your eyes to the outlines of the interesting mushrooms,” she explains.

Table from Wynberg Furnishers. **Chairs** from Chair Crazy. **Crockery, cutlery and serving spoons** from @home. **Napkins** from Ebony.



Marina's table decor tips:

- Use natural elements such as stone, felt and wood for warmth. We combined these with plenty of raw veggies, including mushrooms, but be sure you know which species are poisonous if you pick them yourself.
- Stick to the theme and keep your decor simple. Don't bring in too many elements. One wow piece will do.
- Fresh flowers are lovely, but they can get in the way. Keep table elements practical and ensure that your centrepieces are at the right height for socialising. Also don't forget to leave space on the table for those serving dishes that are in the oven.



STEAL THIS STYLE

- ◀ Salad **bowl on stand**, R380, @home.
- ▼ Jars **Tourron bowl**, R180, and Jars **Tourron pasta plate**, R190, both Entrepo.



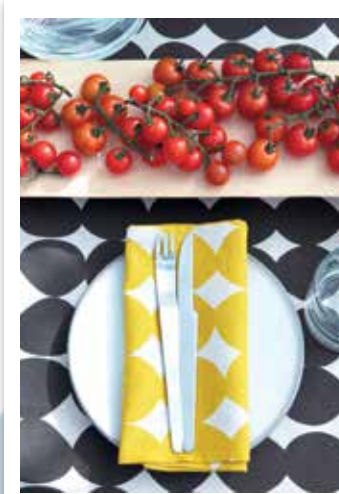
◀ Black & Blum **flower loop**, R350, l'Emile-et-Son.

COMPILED BY MARIAN VAN WYK PHOTOGRAPHS GREG COX DECOR STYLIST GERHARD DE VILLIERS OF CONCEPTUALIZE & STYLE EVENTS FOOD PREPARED AND STYLED BY RIEDWAAN ROOKNODIEN, GREEN CATERING & EVENTS

RETRO APPEAL

For her festive table Heather Moore (pictured), owner of Skinny laMinx, combined the simplicity of Scandinavian design with the timelessness and organic feel of her fresh, local fabrics. “I teamed my Pebble napkins and table runner with organic wooden pieces, local blooms and Swazi glassware,” says Heather. She added interest with fresh produce, quirky retro colours and vintage finds. “I always have my eyes peeled for vessels with interesting forms, and vintage shops and car boot sales can turn up wonderful surprises, such as my carved wooden vessel and mid-century Danish ceramic vase. And being a celebratory table, I brought out my best Arne Jacobsen cutlery and added some festive flair with a simple dowel-rod Christmas tree.” ▷

Home designed by Loudon Perry Anderson Architects. Pebble **napery, cushions** and laser-cut birch ply **tree decorations** all from Skinny laMinx. Glassware and **wooden platter** from LIM.



STEAL THIS STYLE

- Cocobohème **salad servers**, R220 per pair, l'Emile-et-Son.
- ◀ Wooden **vessel and candleholder**, from R320 each, Goet.
- **Napkins** in Pebble design, colour Lollipop, R150 per pair, Skinny laMinx.



Heather's table decor tips:

- Clean and simple doesn't mean plain and boring. I used a riot of geometric prints, but kept the crazy in check by sticking to a limited colour palette.
- Set some constants to help you make choices. This could be a limited colour palette (I used browns, yellows and reds) or a pattern.
- Use texture such as wood, chunky glass and stoneware to add a base note to an otherwise smooth, contemporary look.
- Stationery shops have loads of cheap, simple decorating tools. I stuck sticky dots onto white thread to make eye-catching festive decorations. You could even use them to create an entire panel of 'wallpaper' in minutes!

SOURCES

l'Emile-et-Son l-emile-et-son.com/store **Goet** goet.co.za **LIM** lim.co.za **Loudon Perry Anderson Architects** loudonperryanderson.com **Skinny laMinx** 021 424 6290 or shop.skinnylaminx.com

COMPILED BY MARIAN VAN WYK PHOTOGRAPHS GREG COX FOOD STYLING NIKKI WERNER





COLOUR BURST

Soft furnishings designer and manufacturer, Gerry Young's colourful festive table is as simple as it is stunning. Preferring to show the beautiful patina of the wooden table top, Gerry (pictured) chose not to have a tablecloth. She then combined brightly-coloured vases with individual blooms, butterfly motif place mats and dip-dyed napkins to create a table that bursts with interest. "Colourful Chinese lanterns suspended above the table give it an especially celebratory feel," explains Gerry. She also used interesting crockery and cutlery with a vintage feel to give the setting a casual, welcoming look, enhanced by the mismatched chairs and bright cushions to make guests as comfortable as possible. **GNH**

Coloured **vases** from Mint the Shop and Beez Neez.
Place mats and **napkins** from Loads of Living.
Crockery from Boardmans.

Gerry's table decor tips:

- Break up a supermarket bunch of flowers and place in different vases for more impact.
- Attach Chinese lanterns to a piece of fishing line with wire paper clips and string the line from one corner of the space to the other, or create a framework from dowel rods and suspend the lanterns from it.
- Mismatched crockery and cutlery give a relaxed feel to a setting.
- Create a twist on the traditional Christmas bauble by dip-dying them. Submerge half the ball in enamel paint and hang over newspaper to dry overnight.

STEAL THIS STYLE

▶ Floral embroidered **cushion**, R225, Woolworths.

▲ **Yellow glass vase**, R160, and **green glass vase**, R100, both Mint the Shop.

▼ Scallop-edged **dinner plate**, R49,95, Woolworths.



SOURCES

Beez Neez 071 546 3119 **Boardmans** boardmans.co.za **Gerry Young** rosehipdesign.wordpress.com
Loads of Living loadsofliving.co.za **Mint the Shop** minttheshop.com **Woolworths** woolworths.co.za